

House leadership hangs rural America out to dry

Mankato, MN – Today, Congressman Walz released the following statement after House GOP leadership announced that they would cancel the October work session and send Congress home for a seven-week recess after a three day session this week. Currently, leadership has no plans to allow a vote on the bipartisan five-year Farm Bill this week.

“The American people go about their business every day and expect Congress to do the same. I am absolutely appalled that House leadership would send us home without getting our chores done and voting on a five-year Farm Bill.”

“Make no mistake; the farm bill isn’t just for farmers. Whether it comes in the form of steady, dependable prices at the grocery store or relief for drought stricken farmers, the Farm Bill affects and gives certainty to everyone.”

“This is especially true for rural America. In small towns across this country, local businesses depend on the farm economy to survive. When farmers do well, local businesses do well. Farmers spend their money on Main Street, buying new furniture and appliances, new equipment from their implement dealer, and food at local restaurants. Without a five-year Farm Bill, these small businesses will also suffer. House leadership should allow us to vote on this bipartisan five-year bill and give these folks certainty. Rural America—and the rest of the country—can’t wait.”

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The bipartisan five-year Farm Bill is ready to go. The bill passed out of the House Agriculture Committee with a strong bipartisan vote of 35-11 in late July and saves \$35 billion. But even with strong bipartisan support, House leadership stonewalled and has refused to allow a vote on the five-year bill by the full chamber. The current Farm Bill, passed in 2008, expires at the end of this month.

With House leadership canceling the October work session, Congress will have worked a total of eight days from August 4 – November 13. By not scheduling a vote on the five-year Farm Bill, House leadership is certainly living up to their reputation as a “Do Nothing” Congress.

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